

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 BONN 06373 071832Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----043429 080743Z /21
R 071826Z APR 78
FM AMEMBASSY BONN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7447

S E C R E T BONN 06373

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MNUC, ENRG, MARR, GW
SUBJECT: COMMENT BY OPPOSITION BUNDESTAG LEADER ON
ERW ISSUE

1. A LEADING BUNDESTAG MEMBER WHO IS ONE OF THE TOP
OPPOSITION EXPERTS ON DEFENSE AND FOREIGN POLICY ISSUES
HAS TOLD US THE FOLLOWING REGARDING THE OPPOSITION AT-
TITUDE ON US HANDLING OF THE ERW MATTER:

-- IT IS TRUE THAT THE RECENT WAVE OF SPECULATION RE-
GARDING THE FATE OF THE ER WEAPON HAS PRODUCED SOME
SEVERE PROBLEMS FOR SCHMIDT AND HIS GOVERNMENT. IN
THIS SENSE, THE OPPOSITION WILL BENEFIT.

-- HOWEVER, THERE ARE TWO WAYS IN WHICH THE OPPOSITION
DOES NOT BENEFIT:

(A) US HESITATION ABOUT PRODUCTION OF THE ER WEAPON
GIVES ENCOURAGEMENT TO THOSE POLITICAL ELEMENTS THAT
ARE AGAINST ALL ARMAMENT; MOST OF THOSE POLITICAL
ELEMENTS LIKE TO ATTACK THE CDU AS MILITARISTIC.

(B) PERCEPTIONS OF US UNCERTAINTY RAISE DOUBTS ABOUT
SECRET

SECRET

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THE GENERAL WISDOM OF STRONGLY PRO-AMERICAN POLICIES,
POLICIES THAT THE CDU HAS ALWAYS ESPOUSED.

2. THE MEETING WITH THE OPPOSITION SPOKESMAN WAS INTER-
RUPTED BY A TELEPHONE CALL INFORMING HIM OF THE PRESI-
DENT'S DECISION TO LEAVE THE PRODUCTION QUESTION OPEN.
THE SPOKESMAN COMMENTED THAT SUCH A DECISION WAS FAR

BETTER THAN A DECISION TO CANCEL PRODUCTION.
STOESSEL

SECRET

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: OPPOSITION PARTIES, FOREIGN POLICY POSITION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 07 apr 1978
Decaption Date: 20 Mar 2014
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978BONN06373
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780152-0267
Format: TEL
From: BONN
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780482/aaaacrwq.tel
Line Count: 64
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: dba9d4b4-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION SS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 26 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3046204
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: COMMENT BY OPPOSITION BUNDESTAG LEADER ON ERW ISSUE
TAGS: MNUC, ENRG, MARR, GE
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/dba9d4b4-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014